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Pamela Creedon
Executive Officer
CVRWQCB
11020 Sun Center Drive, #200
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-6114

SUBJECT: Clean-up and Abatement Order (CAO) for the Rubicon Trail

I am writing to you about the Clean-up and Abatement Order (CAO) for the Rubicon Trail as a member of the Bay Chapter of the Ski Touring section of the Sierra Club and as a member of the Snowlands group. I am very concerned that the Rubicon Trail is seeing increased damage from those new high-impact specialty 'rock crawling' vehicles. These vehicles lower the water quality. It's not surprising to me that the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB) issued El Dorado County Department of Transportation a draft Cleanup and Abatement Order containing a list of much needed measures to address the devastation and resource abuse. These measures include a winter wet season closure, adopting a management plan, use quotas, and user fees to help pay for it.

I support the implementation of a strong final Cleanup and Abatement Order recommended by the CVRWQCB. The famous Rubicon Trail should be the Crown Jewel of Four Wheeling - and it should be managed as a sustainable historic trail. Major changes must be made to:

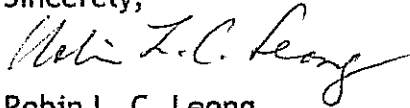
- **Protect our Forests.** While the Rubicon is a county road, it has become an unmanaged extreme off road vehicle park with severe impacts to the Trail and adjacent National Forest lands that are being destroyed by off-roaders.
- **Take proven measures.** The winter wet season closure of the Trail is the first major step that should be implemented immediately. The abuses of snow and wet season travel by 4x4 vehicles on this route is well documented by the users' own photos. Over the snow travel on nearby USFS dirt roads is not allowed. This one measure will go a long way toward eliminating a major cause of the ongoing resource damage with little to no cost to El Dorado County. Gates are a simple proven form of enforcement.
- **Protect fragile resources.** Restore the trail to a narrow historic street legal 4x4 route. Take steps to fix the damage already inflicted. Adopt an Operations and Maintenance Plan. Require cleanup of all oil spills and carry out of all human waste. Install, maintain, and monitor erosion control measures to ensure no damage is done to water quality.

- Eliminate the use of extreme vehicles. These are causing most of the damage. Restrict use to street legal vehicles only.
- Use permits, fees, and quotas to protect the Trail. The Rubicon passes through high alpine forests identical to those in adjacent Desolation Wilderness. The difference between the two is appalling. The Forest Service limits use in Desolation through a quota system and a permit fee; why can't the county do the same for the Rubicon Trail?
- Stop encroachment into non-motorized acres. Enforce existing boundaries and regulations.

El Dorado County needs to follow the law and clean up that wonderful trail.

Thank you for allowing me to comment on this historic trail.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robin L. C. Leong".

Robin L. C. Leong